



# COVID-19 Research Grants Project

Administered and managed in partnership with The Health Collaborative and Metro Health





## Background & Funding

- Historically, pandemics have disproportionately affected the underserved, including those with low-income and ethnic minorities
- \$500,000 of CARES Act Funding allocated for San Antonio-based COVID-19 research projects
- Goal: To better understand of the impact of COVID-19 on marginalized communities
- Funding guidelines: Coronavirus Relief Fund Guidance for State, Territorial, Local, and Tribal Governments April 22, 2020



## Grant Process

- Online Grant Portal: <https://www.growhealthyfund.com/>
- Review Committee
- Timeline
  - AUG 3 - RELEASE OF RFP
  - AUG 13 - FINAL DAY TO SUBMIT PROPOSALS (5:00pm)
  - AUG 14 - COMMITTEE REVIEW PROCESS BEGINS
  - AUGUST 28 - AWARDS ANNOUNCED
  - OCT 31- PROGRESS REPORTS DUE
  - DEC 11 - FINAL REPORT DUE
  - **JAN 14, 2021 - COMMUNITY REPORT RELEASE**



## Awardees

- Children's Rehabilitation Institute TeletonUSA \$  
*Alza La Voz: Amplifying the Voices of Families of Children with Special Needs*
- Community Information Now (CI:NOW)  
*COVID-19 & Health Disparities*
- Martinez Street Women's Center  
*Undocufund Emergency Assistance*
- University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio - ReACH Center  
*Quality of life & Perceived Needs of Survivors of COVID-19 Infection*
- University of Texas at San Antonio Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering  
*Wastewater Informed Epidemiological Monitoring of COVID-19 in Bexar County*

# Children's Rehabilitation Institute TeletonUSA (CRIT)



Research Category:  
CPPR

## Alza La Voz: Amplifying the Voices of Families of Children with Special Needs

*From predominantly Hispanic/Latinx backgrounds  
around the COVID-19 pandemic*

*Maria Jose Guerra, PT, DPT, C/NDT*

*Daniel Millar, PT, DPT*

*Cynthia Riley, MD, OTR*

*Steven Silver*

*Veronica Sullivan, OTR*

Children's Rehabilitation Institute  
TeletonUSA

The purpose of this study was to describe the experiences of parents of children with special needs during the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, we aimed to amplify the voices of those from a primary Hispanic/Latinx background, as more than 85% of online survey participants identified as Hispanic/Latino.

- With over 85% of online survey participants in this study identifying as Hispanic/Latino, these findings may help improve awareness of the experiences unique to this population.
- Further research is recommended to explore culturally relevant coping strategies that are effective in promoting one's physical, emotional, and mental health.
- 5 themes emerged from the focus group data:
  - (1) Challenges from technology
  - (2) Feelings of social isolation and stress
  - (3) Comorbidity considered for school/work
  - (4) Telemedicine offered pros and cons
  - (5) Identify recreational activities as important
- ***Financial insecurity, exacerbated caregiver burden, and chronic fear over their child's comorbidities*** are among the most stressful factors affecting these parents.

# Community Information Now (CI:NOW)



Research Category:  
Epidemiology

## COVID-19 and Health Disparities

Preliminary research showing how the pandemic is changing the inequity and injustice already shouldered by marginalized communities

Community Information Now  
(CI:NOW)

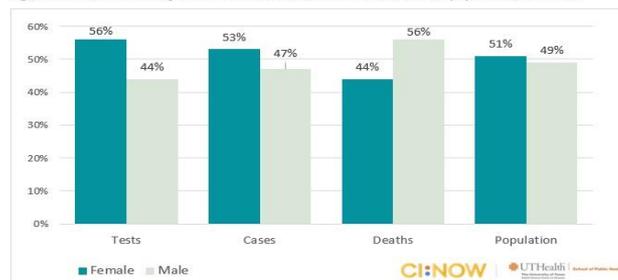
Throughout fall 2020 CI:Now compiled and analyzed a wealth of extant data to shed light on differences in how COVID-19 is affecting Bexar County neighborhoods and groups of people in terms of health, income, employment and business, housing, and other community priorities. This preliminary research is also intended to show how the pandemic is worsening (or just changing) the inequity and injustice already shouldered by marginalized communities. Bexar County's health disparities are best seen by looking through both a demographic lens (race/ethnicity, sex, age group) and a place lens (census tract, ZIP code tabulation area).

Figure 6. Ratio of percent of COVID-19 deaths to percent of population by race/ethnicity, Bexar Co.



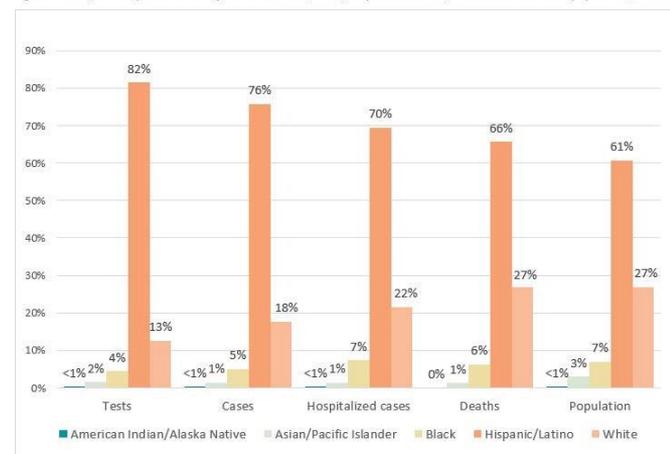
\* Percentages may add to more than 100% due to rounding error

Sources: Population figures are from U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2019 5-Year Estimates. COVID-19 data are from San Antonio Metropolitan Health District COVID-19 monthly epidemiological report released 11/9/2020, retrieved from <https://covid19.sanantonio.gov/About-COVID-19/Dashboards-Data/Epidemiological-Reports>



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Figure 4. Race/ethnicity distribution of COVID-19 tests, cases, hospitalized cases, and deaths vs. overall population, Bexar Co.



\* Percentages may add to more than 100% due to rounding error

Sources: Population figures are from U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2019 5-Year Estimates. COVID-19 data are from San Antonio Metropolitan Health District COVID-19 monthly epidemiological report released 11/9/2020, retrieved from <https://covid19.sanantonio.gov/About-COVID-19/Dashboards-Data/Epidemiological-Reports>

# Martinez Street Women's Center



Research Category:  
CPPR

## Undocufund Emergency Assistance

Research undertaken with the intent that lessons learned from this program could help make other local COVID-19 relief efforts more effective

Martinez Street Women's Center

One popular description of the varying impact of COVID-19 is that "we're all in the same storm, but we're in very different boats;" and targeted emergency assistance (e.g., rent and utility assistance) is a critical component of an effective COVID-19 response. Martinez Street Women's Center's COVID-19 Undocufund emergency assistance program focuses on serving undocumented immigrants. This research was undertaken with the intent that lessons learned could help make other local COVID-19 relief efforts more effective by shedding light on the following two questions:

- 1- What barriers do undocumented immigrants face in accessing emergency assistance?
- 2- Can those barriers be lowered without sacrificing accountability, increasing the likelihood that assistance is received by those who truly need it?

Figure 4. Percent of cited needs that were met by Martinez Street\*

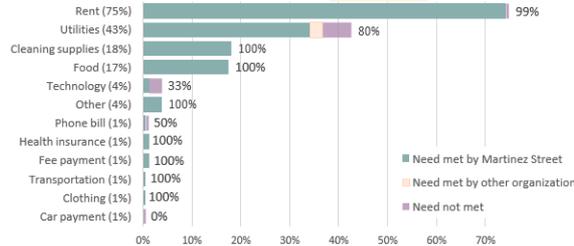


Figure 7. Percent of requests citing problems accessing emergency assistance\*

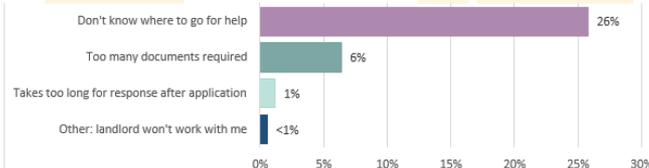


Table 1. ZIP code of clients and instances of emergency assistance provided

ZIP code	No. of clients	Pct of total clients	No. of assistance requests	Pct of total request
78211	12	9%	15	10%
78201	8	6%	9	6%
78220	9	6%	10	6%
78224	9	6%	10	6%
78207	8	6%	9	6%
78210	6	4%	7	4%
78228	5	4%	6	4%
78212	5	4%	5	3%
78242	5	4%	5	3%
78202	4	3%	4	3%
78203	4	3%	4	3%
78213	4	3%	4	3%
78216	4	3%	4	3%
78217	4	3%	4	3%
78218	4	3%	4	3%
78223	4	3%	4	3%
78225	4	3%	4	3%
78227	4	3%	4	3%
78237	4	3%	4	3%
Others	32	23%	40	26%
<b>Total</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>100%</b>



Research Category:  
Epidemiology/CPPR

## Quality of Life of Perceived Needs of Survivors of COVID 19 Infection

UTHSCSA - ReACH Center

Health-related quality of life was generally compromised overall and specifically in the domains of physical function, anxiety, depression fatigue, sleep disturbance, ability to participate in social roles and activities pain interference, and cognitive function.

- *Over half of subjects reported trouble concentrating, and 65% were concerned about ongoing COVID-related health impacts.*
- *Employment was also affected, with 20% reporting that they were unable to work due to COVID-19 related illness.*
- *Respondents also reported having serious financial problems (22%) and insufficient income to pay for rent (23%), gas (15%), food (21%), and medications (10%).*
- *Respondents reported stress at home: 23% had interpersonal conflicts with family members or loved ones and 25% reported drinking a little or a lot more than usual.*

Respondents indicated that additional resources would be useful to deal with COVID-related health impacts, to have access to healthcare and vaccinations, and to cover essential expenses (food, housing, bills).



Research Category:  
Epidemiology

## Wastewater Informed Epidemiological Monitoring of COVID-19 in Bexar County

University of Texas at San Antonio  
Department of Civil &  
Environmental Engineering

Beyond clinical testing, wider access to testing for SARS-CoV-2 has so far been severely limited due to logistical difficulties and high costs. Therefore, aggregate information about disease prevalence within a certain community could be useful for monitoring its spread and the effectiveness of health risk assessments and mitigation measures. Together with clinical testing data, additional information could be extrapolated from the viral load in municipal wastewater. This approach is also known as wastewater-based epidemiology (WBE), which has significant potential and high feasibility to serve as an early, cost-effective, community-level indicator of the presence of SARS-CoV-2.

### Key Findings:

- SARS-CoV-2 RNA concentrations in wastewater compared well with publicly reported data on daily positive cases in Bexar County . Changes in SARS-CoV-2 RNA concentrations in wastewater preceded the daily cases by reported date; however, we did not attempt to measure the lag between wastewater data and public testing data since the wastewater results were documented for weekly samples while the public test results were reported for daily cases.
- An increase in COVID-19 cases and wastewater SARS-CoV-2 RNA levels after holiday weekends can provide considerable advance notice of infection dynamics and may warrant special public health interventions during these occasions.



## UTSA Key Findings Continued:

- This information can be an invaluable resource for authorities to map hot spots of disease spread, assess trends over time/seasons, prompt intervention, and correlate the wastewater results with public testing.
- Particularly useful for tracking disease trends in small communities, where public testing cannot currently provide real time and comprehensive information about the health of a community due to logistical difficulties and high cost. The limitations of public testing are compounded in low-resource settings and disadvantaged populations where testing every individual is impractical, slow and cost prohibitive.

# Report Release Event

Tech hosts: NowCastSA

Location: Mexican American Unity Council

Viewable online: <https://youtu.be/EO6h-FpOVWg>



## Join Us

for a virtual release of the  
**COVID-19 COMMUNITY RESEARCH GRANTEE**  
Project Findings

January 14, 2021 @ 2:00pm

[LIVESTREAMING LINK](#)  
& [EVENT INFORMATION](#)



Following health and safety guidelines from the City of San Antonio, this event will be attended virtually.

The final grantee outcomes report will be published on [www.growhealthyfund.com](http://www.growhealthyfund.com).



## Outcomes and Partner Reports available online

[www.Growhealthyfund.com](http://www.Growhealthyfund.com)

Or

Call us for a digital or printed copy



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